

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-17 are pending in this application.

**I. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)**

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 4-6, 10-12 and 14-15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by JP 09-175002 ("Osada"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Osada describes a resin composition for ink-jet recording material. The Office Action, at section 5, pages 2-3, alleges that Osada describes a methyl vinyl ether/maleic anhydride copolymer crosslinked with a polyfunctional isocyanate compound. However, this is incorrect. Osada describes methyl vinyl ether/maleic anhydride copolymer used as a hydrophilic resin (Osada, paragraph [0016]), but describes crosslinking only of polyalkylene oxide resin and isocyanate (Osada, paragraph [0009]). Conversely, independent claims 1, 6 and 12 specifically recite a composition comprising a powder of a crosslinked resin produced by crosslinking a methyl vinyl ether/maleic anhydride copolymer with a polyfunctional isocyanate compound, and a binder resin.

Therefore, Osada does not describe a composition including a powder that is a crosslinked methyl vinyl ether/maleic anhydride copolymer. Osada therefore clearly does not anticipate claims 1, 4-6, 10-12 and 14-15. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

**II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)**

**A. Osada In View Of Koike**

The Office Action rejects claims 2-3, 9 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Osada in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,306,414 ("Koike"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As discussed above, Osada does not anticipate independent claims 1, 6 and 12, as Osada does not disclose a composition including a powder that is a crosslinked methyl vinyl ether/maleic anhydride copolymer, with a binder. Additionally, Osada fails to provide any reason or rationale that would have led one of ordinary skill in the art to have substituted crosslinked methyl vinyl ether/maleic anhydride copolymer for the crosslinked polyalkylene oxide described in Osada with any reasonable expectation of success. Therefore, Osada fails to render obvious claims 1, 6 and 12. Accordingly, Osada also fails to render obvious dependent claims 2-3, 9 and 13.

Koike describes an agricultural aqueous suspension comprising a compound or salt thereof, a condensate of formaldehyde with aromatic sulfonic acid, and an absorptive water-soluble polymer with a specific molecular weight. Koike column 1, lines 61-67, column 5, lines 42-47, and column 6, lines 17-23. This entire composition is described as possibly ground to a size not greater than 10 microns. Koike, column 7, lines 40-56. However, Koike does not describe or suggest a composition including a powder that is a crosslinked methyl vinyl ether/maleic anhydride copolymer, with a binder, as recited in claims 2-3, 9 and 13. Thus, Koike fails to remedy the deficiencies of Osada.

Therefore, Osada and Koike, whether read together or independently, fail to render obvious claims 2-3, 9 and 13. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

B. Osada In View Of Sato

The Office Action rejects claims 7-8, 16 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Osada in view of JP 2001-351588 ("Sato"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

For at least the reasons discussed above, Osada does not render obvious independent claims 1 and 6. Therefore, Osada also fails to render obvious claim 7-8, 16 and 17.

Sato discloses a batter cell pack with a liquid absorption member for absorbing electrolytic solution. Sato, paragraph [0005]. However, Sato does not remedy the deficiencies of Osada, and neither reference discloses nor suggests a composition including a powder that is a methyl vinyl ether/maleic anhydride copolymer crosslinked with a polyfunctional isocyanate, with a binder, as recited in claims 7-8, 16 and 17.

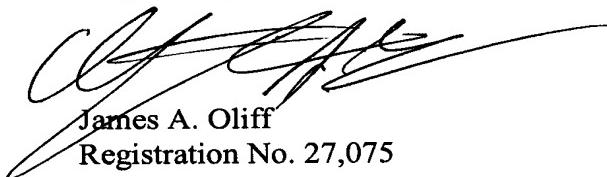
Therefore, Osada and Sato, whether taken separately or in concert, fail to render obvious claims 7-8, 16 and 17. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

**III. Conclusion**

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-17 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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